Vol 1 Recollections notebook of John E Wilkins

Cover and some initial pages missing. Notebook begins in mid-sentence on page now noted as 1.

[1]

the building now occupied as St. Anthony's Hospital. The other schools as far as I recollect were carried on in the basements of the churches. I believe a small building on North fifth street near Chestnut was used by Teacher Aunty Bishop for school purposes. All these schools were Subscription Schools there being no free public schools at the time. The Teachers of these schools so far as I can ascertain were Charles T. Noble, Nathanial Preston, Henry Teel, Benny Hayes, Charles Anderson, Charles Frost, J.B.L. and Moses Soule, a Professor Ross, Miss Hersey, Aunty Bishop, Miss Manson, Miss Lizzie McKennon, Miss Emily Williams, Miss Lizzie Dessert, and Miss Mead. The majority of the female Teachers taught as assistants to the men.

The old Cannon House and first Fire Engine House was on south fourth between Ohio and Walnut streets, west side of street and about the middle of the square.

There was an Oil Mill on the alley of the Square between fourth and fifth streets and Ohio and Wabash streets. The motive power was a great tread wheel about forty feet in diameter and set at an angle the uper part say

twenty feet from the ground. Oxen were used to turn the wheel always going up but never reaching the top as the wheel kept going around and around.

A grist mill on South Seventh Street had the same motive power, a great tread wheel. The owner of this mill was the Rev Samuel Sparks a Baptist preacher. There was no ministers in those days. Only preachers of the gospel. There was also a distillery at Cherry Street and the River operated by a tread wheel.

There was a Grave Yard at the North east corner of Sixth and Ohio Streets.

Also one on North Water Street west side of street and south of the Vandalia bridge and near Sycamore street.

The first Post Office was on North first street about two hundred feet North of Wabash Street. Then on Second Street, East side of street, about one hundred feet south of Ohio Street.

Then on Ohio Street, North side of street, about one hundred feet West of Second Street.

Then on South third street, East side of street, and about the middle of the square and opposite the Court House.

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Then on Wabash Street, south side of street and about one hundred feet East of fourth street.

Then on South fourth street, west side of street, one hundred and fifty feet from Wabash street.

Then on South Sixth Street, East side of street, one hundred and fifty feet from Wabash street.

Then to the government building seventh and Cherry Sts.

The old Circus ground was at the North East Corner of fifth and Ohio Streets.

And then at Seventh and Wabash Streets (Wabash)

The Saturday play ground of the Town boys was the Common from the old Prairie House at Seventh and Wabash streets west to Schawls Bakeryon the alley between fourth and fifth streets on the North side of Wabash Street a distance of about thirteen hundred feet. Here on Saturdays the boys would collect and under their leaders choose sides and play all sorts of Ball games in vogue at that day such as Base Ball, Bull Pen and Shinney. The latter bring the favorite game with bounds the full length of the Common.

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Strawberry Hill was what might be called the winter play ground of the boys and girls. The hill proper extended from third to Seventh Streets and North of Hulman Street. Here was good coasting on sleighs in winter. And the hill was also noted as the place where on Dyas was executed for murder it being the first legal hanging in the county.

The first Gas Works was at fifth street and Vandalia Rail Road or the old Canal line across the city.

Chauncy Rose's old store room was North East Corner of Sixth and Chestnut Streets. It was a one story frame building about eighteen feet wide and twenty five feet long and painted a dirty red color, and faced on Chestnut street. With a door on ~~Seventh~~ Sixth Street at the South Corner with the name "C. Rose Store" over the door.-This building was first at Ohio & first St where C Rose did business.

The old Silk Worm house was at sixth and Eagle Streets North West corner.

The old Pork House Theatre was on the West side of the alley. South side of street (Mulbury) between second and third streets.

The old Yellow Bridge across Lost Creek was about one fourth of a mile East of the present city park. late Gilbert residence on the Old National Road and East of town. This was a double bridge built allmost

entirely of wood. The frame being put and held together with wooden pins and the floor held down by the stringers secured with wooden pins. All the iron in the structure was the nails in the roof and weatherboarding on the sides. The bridge rested on beautifully cut stone and was built by the general government.

The building where the Rebel prisoners of war was confined was the Farrington and Krumbaahr Pork House at about eight hundred South first street.

The first Terre Haute Orchestra was Gregg and Glazier of two instruments.

The Terre Haute branch of the State Bank building was on Ohio between Second and third Streets, South side middle of square.

The old stone house built by Major Duwees and later the National Preston homestead was at South East corner of 14 ½ and Poplar Streets. Erected in 1838.

The first frame building was built for Curtis Gilbert on the bluff at the foot of Ohio Street.

The Wabash and Erie Canal run down the River to Wabash Street with a large basin at the foot of Eagle

street and then passed under the first street bridge into another large Basin and then at Second and Chestnut Streets passed through double locks and run North to where the Vandalia Rail Road now (1910) has its tracks. Then east to just beyond Ninth Street and then South to the City limits with a double basin at Wabash Street.

The old Indian Orchard in North end of town was on the bluff south of Locust Street and west of first street.

The Charles Haines flat boat yard was at the foot of the bluff at the old Indian Orchard.

Dr Parsons had an Apple Orchard on South Seventh Street near the city limits.\

Chauncey Warren had an orchard, south Sixth Street near Oak Street.

Demas Deming had an orchard at sixth and Poplar Streets.

Curtis gilbert had an orchard on Wabash between Sixth and Seventh Streets.

John F. King had an orchard about where six and one half Streets now is and North of Chestnut Street.

Alexander McGregor had an orchard on Sycamore Street between fifth and Sixth Streets.

Salmon Wright had an orchard at North West Corner third and oak Streets.

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Wallace had an Orchard on South water near Oak Street.

Joseph Miller had an Orchard on North Second Street and North of Chestnut Street. This latter orchard was where the henry tech School of the North and used to hold their May day outing with a Pic Nic, May Queen Procession and all.

The old Road House of Stage day times were the “Watton Cottage” four miles North on the Lafayette Road.

The “Redford House” stood at about Eighth Street and Lafayette Avenue. Across the road East and opposite the Redford place was one of Terre Haute’s famous Race tracks. The “four mile House” on the National Road, East of town.

The “National Road House” on Wabash Street, West of Eleaventh South side of street and was well out in the country in the early fifties.

These Road Houses were not the Road Houses of the present day. but were respectable houses of entertainment In those days after the first heavy snowfall and the winter had well set in one could expect good sleighing all the winter and everybody that had a horse also had a sleigh. And the young men of the Town made

great sleighs drawn by four horses. The sleighs holding from twenty to thirty people and parties would be made for visits to the Road houses for dancing and other entertainments. One notable sleigh that was built by Cone and Weatherwax a firm of young carpenters. The bed of this sleigh must have been thirty feet long and rested on two sets of runners. The bed was made of twisted rye straw, the ropes of straw perhaps two inches in diameter. These ropes were woven in and out between upright stakes set in stringers fastened to the runners. The front and rear of the bed must have been ten feet high and curved down to about six feet high in the center of the sides of the body of the sleigh. On each side of the drivers seat were beautifully carved swans heads with long curved necks. There was a door in the rear like the door of an omnibus and when this was closed no wind could reach the inmates. The sleigh would hold fifty people and six horses driven by Si Bullard Terre Haute's most accomplished and noted stage driver was a sight worth seeing.

The Taverns or Inns of the Town were the "Buntin House" on South third Street, East side between Ohio and Walnut Streets. In its time the leading Hos-

telry of the Town. It was first opened in 1851 by a Frenchman named Levy who called it the "City Hotel". Later a man named Brown became the Landlord and was known as "Brown's Hotel". Brown was succeeded by T.C. Buntin the most popular Landlord the Town ever had and went by the name of the "Buntin House" for fifty years and long after Mr Buntin had ceased to be its landlord. Here fifteen to twenty stage coaches drawn by four horses would round up daily and disgorge their loads of humanity.

The "Indian Tavern" was at first and Wabash Streets., South East corner. This was first known as the "Eagle and the Lion".

The "Clark House" at first and North West Corner.

The "Stewart House" was on North Second Street West side of the street and about one hundred feet North of Wabash Street.

The "Green Tree" at Second and Cherry Streets, South East Corner.

The "Broadway" at third and Cherry Streets, North East Corner.

The "White Hall" at third and Mulbury Streets, South East Corner.

The "Eagle" at third and Mulbury Streets, North East Corner.

The "Pavillion" at fifth and Cherry Streets, North East Corner.

The "Prairie House" at Seventh and Wabash Sts. North East Corner.

Dayton Topping had an Inn at fourth and Wabash Streets, South West Corner ~~But if it had a name I have forgotten it.~~

Guy Welch played at keeping Tavern in a three roomed house at first and Cherry streets, North West corner, but his efforts was looked upon as a kind of a joke by people generally. and a saying used by the boatmen on the Wabash, Ohio, and Mississippi Rivers from Lafayette, Ind to New Orleans was “Oh yes, like Guy Welch keeps Tavern”.

The first Locomotive Engines ever brought to Terre Haute was for the Terre Haute and Indianapolis Rail Road and came by the way of the Wabash and Erie Canal from the Lakes and was landed or unloaded at the Basin at Wabash Street.

The first Rail Road Iron was for the same Road and was of English make and was brought by River from New Orleans in great Mississippi River boats some so large that even when the River was in flood or during the January thaw and rise of water the boats had to anchor out in the stream and throw the iron into the River and when the water receded the iron was loaded onto wagons and hauled to the Rail Road.

The Chauncy Rose pasture was east of Seventh and North of Wabash Streets and extended to Chestnut Street. As late as the early fifties there was a gate where now Cherry Street crosses Seventh Street where the milch cows of the town were let in and out of pasture.

Fort Harrison was located two miles North of the Court House on the bank of the Wabash River.

Terre Haute was laid out and plated in 1816. The name is a French word and means “Land high” the town being on a high bluff.

The first man to turn a furrow in Vigo County for farming purposes was Joseph Liston in 1811. and who had a farm two miles and a half South East of the Court House.

The first Fire Company was organized in 1846 or 7. Melville D Topping was Captain.

The first Military organization was a dragoon company in the middle forties by Major Huntington who became its Captain.

About the same time an Infantry Company was organized by Captain James Hook.

The first Terre Haute Newspaper was the Western Register published in 1823.

The National Road was built to Terre Haute in 1834.

The “Florence” was the first steamboat to visit Terre Haute in 1823 and the Plow Boy in 1824. The greatest steamboat navigation on the Wabash River was in the early fifties. About that time during the Winter floods in the River it was a common thing to see from twelve to fifteen large Ohio and Mississippi River Steamers along the landing from the bridge at Ohio Street to Poplar Street unloading Rail Road Iron and merchandise of all kinds and loading with pork products and corn and all kinds of country products.

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Sibleytown was located as follows.

Commencing at Third Street and the Vandalia Rail Road tracks as now located ~~(1910)~~ and running east to fifth street then North to Locust Street then west to third street and then south to place of beginning. After the Canal was built across town just where the Vandalia tracks are located all that part of Terre Haute North of the Canal was known and called Sibley Town.

I have submitted the foregoing list of landmarks to Capt George A Bettcher of North Liberty, Indiana, who was born 1838 at Locust and Seventh Streets. Also to Dr. Lawrence A Ball of Priarieton who lived in early days at Second and Cherry Streets 80 years ago and they both agree that the landmarks are correct.

~~I myself am~~ I Mr Wilkins was seventy six years old with a perfectly good memory and who lived on Seventh near Locust Streets in 1846 and have kept in touch with Terre Haute every since, belive they are practically correct.

~~May 1911~~ ~~John E Wilkins~~

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Some Recollections of An old Terre Haute Fire Fighter

By

John E Wilkins

Secretary.

Vigo Engine and Hose Company No. 2

Terre Haute Volunteer Fire Department

January 1910.

My first recollections of the old Volunteer Firefighters of Terre Haute dates about the year 1847.

At that time the fire force was composed of every male citizen of the town.

An ordinance of the Town Board required that every householder should keep on hand and at all times filled with water, one leather bucket for each male in his family over the age of 18 and under the age of 45 years.

When there was an alarm of fire each person as above was required to go to the scene of the fire with his bucket of water. As a matter of fact those persons that lived at a distance from the fire got there with empty buckets having spilt the water on the run. On the date mentioned and for a number of years after the draymen of Terre Haute kept large hogsheads made especially to haul water from the River to sell to the citizens for household purposes.

In the event of a fire the Town Board paid to the draymen who got to the fire with the first hogshead of water five dollars, to the second two dollars and fifty cents, to the third one dollar and twenty five cents and for each additional hogshead of water brought to the fire twenty five cents the regular price to the citizens. It was a sight to see the draymen going

to their homes after their hogsheads and then to the River on a full run their two wheeled drays bouncing over ever obstruction they came to in an effort to secure first money. It sometime occured that two draymen would be on their way to supply customers with water from the River when an alarm of fire occured and then an amusing race would take place to the scene of the fire.

When the firefighters arrived at a fire lines of men and large boys were formed to the nearest wells, cisterns, and to the hogsheads of water from the River one line passing the full buckets to the fire and the other line passing back the empty buckets to be filled again and so on until the fire was out or the house burned down. All this work under the direction of the President of the Town Board and the Town Marshall and they did most excellent service when the fire had not got to much under way.

The first persons that I recollect directing the work at a fire was Brittain M. Harrison the President of the Town Board and William Marr the Town Marshall. I believe they were the first Fire Chiefs of Terre Hautes Fire Brigade.

At the time I mention (1847) There was where is the North end of the present (1910) Police Head Quarters building an old frame house called the Cannon House from the fact that an

old Iron Cannon (6 lb) was kept there and used to fire salutes on the fourths of July and other occasions, that is when the citizens of Clinton or Marshall did not steal it, which they did more than once.

This house was also used as a Fire Engine House for a season. The Town Board purchased from Agnew the Philadelphia Fire Engine builder a third class hand engine which was called the Hoosier No. one. This engine was a double deck machine that maned twenty four men. This Engine was placed in the cannon House.

A Fire Company was now organized from among the merchants and clerks in the business houses around the Court House Square and on the main (Wabash) street of the Town, Melville D Topping Captain. The Town Board had built four cisterns one in each corner and inside the Court House Square . These cisterns held one hundred barrels of water and were lined with wood and were filled by pipes leading from each corner of the courthouse.

The Engine carried but two sections or one hundred feet of Hose so that it was necessary to get as close to a fire as the heat would permit and lines of men would be formed to wells and cisterns and the drays with their hogsheads of water from the River would be driven alongside the machine and the engine box would be kept filled with water by buckets and the engine men would playaway throwing the water on the fire through a six foot pipe fastened to a gooseneck on the deck of the

[17]achine or through the one hundred feet of hose. If a fire hapened about the Court House Square the sections would be used in the cisterns.

The first fire I recollect was in a large two story frame building at the North West corner of third and Wabash streets occupied as a dry goods and general store by Hack Bosworth in the winter of 1847. The fire was in the roof of the building. The engine company ran their machine into the Court House yard and alongside the cistern at the North East Corner and droped their section into the cistern screwed their six foot pipe onto the gooseneck on the deck of the machine but before the enginemen could play away the leather bucket brigade had the fire out to the great disappointment of a crowd of citizens that had collected and who wanted to see the engine throw water, it being the first fire since the engine had been received.

This was the mode of firefighting up to about the year 1855. about that time there came to Terre Haute to live some old experienced firemen from some of the eastern cities. Among these expert firemen were such well know citizens as Joe yates, Tom Lowerre, John A. Bryan, Billy Van Brunt, Tom Long the Rail Road engineer, D.W. Watson, Bob Coc, William Barr, big Tom Barr, Dick Cotton, Jack Adams, and others. These experienced firemen immediately commenced to organize the Fire Department so well known in the fifties and before the War of the Rebellion.

Yates, Bryan, Lowerre, Watson, the Barrs, Cotton, and others organized the well known Vigo No. 2 Company.

Van Brunt, Long and others went with the Northern Liberty No. 3 Company. This company was maned by Rail Road men and Citizens of the North end of town with house located on near third streets. Cox, Adams and others formed the Mohawk No. one Company. This company was maned generally by men in the business district, Professional men, Merchants, Clerks and others. Their machine lay in the south fourth street Fire House now occupied by No. 5 Company of the paid department and Fire Department Head Quarters No. one. They were a fine body of men & did excellent service. The Vigo No two Company was maned by all sorts of the best material. Professional and Business men, skilled mechanics and laboreres of the best type. This Company in Engine and Hose men had at one time one hundred and seventy five men on the [illegible] book of the Company. But some droped out and others joined so that there must have been all of two hundred men members of this Company. These men were so scattered about the Town that on a run to a fire fresh men were jumping the rope all along the route to the fire which gave this Company much the advantage over the other Companies in getting first water on fires most of the time an honor allways being looked after. Many times forty or

fifty men of No two's Company would be in the upstairs Hall of their Fire House all night awaiting for an alarm of fire so as to get out quick and get first water. And if fires happened to far apart there was such a thing as sending out a Committee to find one and they usually succeeded some old worthless shed would burst into flames from spontanious combustion.

This was the fire force of Terre Haute in the late fifties. A Company calling themselves the No. 4 Fire Engine and Hose Company was organized by the Coopers of Sage's Cooper Shop on South Second Street and had the old Hoosier engine for a while but this Company did not last long and I dont think they ever made a run to a fire.

On the organization of the Vigo No. 2 Company the City council bought a third class Honeyman Engine for that Company. This was a very good machine of its Class and did good service and is the same machine now in the possesion of the old volunteer Fire mens association.

A second class Agnew Engine was got from the Cincinnati Fire Department for the No. one Company. This also was a good machine and in the hands of No. one Company did good work.

The city purchased for No. 3 Company a fine Jim Smith Piano box engine of the first class and much the best machine in the department at that time. The company having so many

Rail Road men in its membership a number of whom was allways out on the road at their work could not get out as quick as the other companies but once at a fire did as good work as any. It is hardly necessary to speak further of the Hook and Ladder Company. The were all Germans and among the best of Terre Haute Citizens and when they got to a fire knew their bisiness and did it. Sometime during the Civil War I believe it was the City purchased two first class piano box Engines for the No. one and two Companies.

The Uniform of the No. two company consisted of a blue velvet cap, a red shirt or jacket with black velvet collar and cuffs open in front to display the white shirt front, black pantallons, black patent leather belt with Brass Buckle. The belt and buckle with No. and name of Company. The Hosemen carried brass spanners used to couple and uncouple the hose and made fast to the belt by large snaps and the Hosemen wore leather hats that a blow from a brick could not dent.

The City built a Fire House on the ground where the old Common House stood. There were two long rooms below for apparatus and a large Hall upstairs for Company meetings and Social gatherings. This is the same Fire House occupied by the No. 2 Fire Company at South fourth and Farrington Streets having been moved to that locality.

The No. one Company lay in the South room of this

South fourth Street Fire House for a short time. And the No. two Company occupied the North room. A long shed was built along the South side of this house for the Hook and Ladder Company's Truck. Later the City built a Fire House for No. one Company on south Ninth Street, the same house now occupied by No. 5 Company of the paid department and as Fire Department Head Quarters. There was also built for No. 3 Company a Fire House on Lafayette near third street. The Hook and Ladder Company then moved their truck into the South room of the fourth street House vacated by No. one Company and the department then was in a very good condition and ready for any work that they might be called upon to do. Each Company had a seperate Hose Company of the same name as the Company except the Mohawk No one Company whose hose Company was called the Kate Tousey after the wife of a councilman who was instrumental in getting the Company a handsome carriage.

There was very little of the rough element in the department. Some of the boys thought themselves and tried to make others believe that they were "Jack Kizers" or a "Mose" and when a little mellow would go about swagering and singing

"My name is jack Kizer
I was born in Spring Garden.
My father to make me a preacher did try,
But there is no use of talking,
I am bound to be a hard one,
I am bound to be a butcher or die"

No two Companies ever came together in a fight but on more than one occasion there was a close call for it.

The City offered a silver trumpet to the Company making a certain run and get into action in the shortest time. The contest took place at Early Grove north of town. The Vigo No. two Company was awarded the prize by the judges they having made the quickest time. The No. 3 Company protested and claimed that members of the No. two Company had run alongside of their engine and loosened the brake straps. There is no doubt the contention of No. 3 Company was correct but the No. two Company should have been allowed this privilege so as to have an equal chance with the other companies whose brakes was allways in position to play away while the No. two's Engine brakes were straped fast to the sides of the machine and had to be shifted around to the ends of the machine before the engine men could play away. At any rate the No. two Company kept the trumpet and there would have been a fight then and there but for the good judgement of men in both companies. But that night some of the rough element in No. 3 Company, but not the Company by any means, built a great fire with boxes and barrels at first and Wabash streets and gave the fire alarm thinking that the No. two Company would come a running with their Engine as at a fire and the No. 3 boys hid around in dark corners with piles of stones.

This was just what the No. twos thought would happen and had prepared for it by taking the hose off their reel and replacing it with a box filled with broken rocks and when the expected alarm came the fifty or more men who had been awaiting at their Fire House ran west on Ohio to first street and coming up from the River in the rear of the ambushed men of No. three Company and who finding themselves outflanked and outnumbered took to their heels – fortulantly no one was injured in the short skirmish and on the next meeting of the Companies there was a good natured laught at the expense of No. 3 and all were frinds again.

At the time of the Contest on North third Street the writer was not a member of the department but witnessed the work. The City offered a silver trumpet to the Company throwing a one inch and a quarter stream to the greatest distance. This was not a fair test as the machines ranked first, second, and third class. Water was taken from the cistern at third and Mulbury Streets without a run. The No. one Company threw a stream twenty feet further than the other companies. This wonderful feat caused suspicion and on examination it was found that the nozzle of the No. one Company in use was one inch and a quarter on the outside but on removing a thimble on the

end of the nozzle it showed but seven eighth of an inch which was the size of the stream that they had throwed. This came near causing a row between No's one and three companies and which was only avoided by the judges of the contest refusing to award the Trumpet to either Company.

The only organization as a Company that was inclined to be rowdy was the Kate Tousey Hose Company. Jack Adams had been made Foreman of this Company. He got together about twenty young men and boys to form his Company . Now Adams was not a bad man by any means but when drinking was inclined to be ugly and quarrelsome. This Company never had any trouble with the other companies of the department. But Adams would lead them about the saloons, beer gardens and worse places and the frequently got into rather nasty rows. but at a fire they did their work in good order as Adams was an experienced fire man and took great pride in the work of his men.

The City allowed one hundred dollars to each Company for its annual expenses but this was not sufficient to pay the yearly expenses of a Company and the Company members had to pay the deficit out of their pockets , besides the wear and tear of clothing at fires, the cost of Uniforms and other necessary incidental expenses. The fire fighter had to go at the first tap of the Alarm bell no matter where at or what

doing. There was no time to change clothing and it was frequently the case that expensive suits of clothing was badly injured or entirely ruined at fires. I know that more than one member of two's Hose company had expensive suits ruined at the John D Condit dry goods store fire. This fire was one of the most stubern and difficult to handle that the volunteer department ever tackled. The John D Condit dry goods store was the second room in the block on the North West corner of fourth and Wabash Streets the corner room being used as a drug store at that time. The third story of the Condit Building was filled with old rags sacked and ready for shipment. Here fire was discovered early one morning and on account of the narrow stairways and the dense smoke could not be handled from the inside. The No. one company played from a ladder through a window in front. The No. three Company took a line of the hose to the roof of the drug store and played through holes cut in the roof of the burning building onto the burning rags. The No. two Company played from a ladder through a back window onto the fire. Three streams were played into the burning rags from 7 a.m. until 3 p.m. nbefore the fire was got under. Will Scudder was Foreman of No.

Two's Hose Company but at this fire took the pipe. The writer was a few feet below him on the ladder. We had taken the usual precaution to make ourselves fast to the ladder with large snaps fastened to our belts. Will Barr was about ten feet from the ground on the ladder lighning up the hose and had neglected to make himself fast to the ladder with his belt snap. All three had on leather fire hats that a blow from a brick could not dent. About noon a chimney of the back wall of the burning building and directly over our heads fell from the effect of the intense heat of the burning ragsthe bricks striking on our leather hats but being fast to the ladder the pipe holders did not fall. But Barr was not so lucky the bricks striking him fairly on the head and he fell to the ground but was unhurt. He picked himself up and going across fourth street to Andy Kaufman's Cincinnati House got a drink and went back to work a though nothing had happened.
Another dangerous fire so far as the firefighters were concerned was when B.M. Harrison's Candle factory was located on the canal at about the old Indian Orchard and North of Town. A quick run was made by the entire department but by the time the engines arrived on the ground the building was a mass of flames. Just north of the factory and nearby were several large frame Ice houses and the chief directed the work to save these. The two's pipe was sent to the roof of the Ice house nearest to the fire to play into the

burning building the roof of which had fallen in. Other streams played into the fire and the Ice houses. The writer was with two's pipe on the roof of the Ice house and ever now and then long streams of blue flames would play around the heads of the pipe holders. It was thought to be chemicals burning in the factory. There is no doubt that if one of those streams of fire had struck a person it would have been death. Finally the chief ordered the two's men off the Ice house and they took a new position in the rear of the burning factory and close up and played through a back window. Suddenly the back wall fell outward and the No. two's pipeholders droped the pipe and ran for their lives. Just a miss that was all, another pipe another section of hose and the fight went on. I do not know how the other Companies hosemen fared at this fire but no doubt had a like experience.

These are merely samples of what the fire fighter had to expect when on duty at fires. Twice that I remember No. 2's pipeholders went to their knees through burning roofs.

There was great rivalry among the companies to get their first water on fires, and the two's usually kept well in the lead. There were several reasons for this. There were a goodly number of their men who worked or lived near their

Fire House and they would start the machine lively on an alarm (when the No. one Company lay in the same house with the No. two's the No. one company had this advantageas their men were nearby in the business district and they usually got a short start in a run). And the two's had such a large number of men scattered in all parts of the Town, so that in a run to a fire fresh men were jumping the drag rope all along the route. Several draymen belonged to the Company and it was a common thing to make the drag rope fast to a dray and the draymen would put his horse to a full run and all the men had to do was to keep up and make a noise and of the latter they did a plenty. Also the Company lay in the business district where fires were most frequent. The No. two's men were largely hard working men and they could hold out for a long run allthough their machine was largely the heaviest on account of construction. No. one's men were largely clerks and their wind did not hold out on a run. The No. three's were badly scattered in the north end besides having so many men out on the Rail Road where they worked. As for the Hook and Ladder Company they did not throw water but had frequently to be reconed with on a race and as the boys used to say "them Dutchmen" were allways on hand and frequently held ladders up for their pipe holders before the Engine men could play away.

Also the two's did make some fast runs for first water

without the excitement of a race with some other Company notably the Jim Hook Oil Mill fire at third and Chestnut Sts and the Clayton dwelling house fire on North fourth street. both these fires were very much nearer the fire house of No. 3 than of No. 2 yet the No. two's got first water at both fires. These are only specimens of like runs of the two's.

The Clayton fire was another nasty fire to fight. the fire was in an upstairs room on the South side of the house and on account of the dense smoke could not be handled by way of the stairway. Capt Bryan and the writer had the pipe at this fire and got into the building by way of a ladder and an upstairs window on the north side of the building. The smoke was so heavy that the two's pipemen had to lay flat on the floor and play on the fire an hour before it was got under, and it was necessary at times that one of the other Companies pipeman had to play a stream on the two's pipe holders to drive off the smoke and noxious gasses. in fact, Chief Buntin at one time thought the two's pipemen in such danger that he ordered them out of the building but it was just at the turning point of getting the fire under and the chief finally concluded that it was a part of the trade and let them finish the job. All the companies had like experience at times.

Another fire the two's long remembered was at Professor Soules private School building on South fifth street. It was an extremely cold winter day. The two's made a quick run got a family cistern and soon had the fire out but before they could uncouple and take up the water left in the hose froze solid and the fifty foot sections of hose had to be carries on the shoulders of the men to the Engine house one half a mile away and laid on the floor of the house to be thawed out by a red hot stove while the firefighters thawed themselves out with large tin cups full of strong coffee with about four ounces of Wilkersons best bourbon to each cup. At the time the No.s one and two lay in the same house on South fourth Street there was some close and exciting races between the two Companies on the runs to fires. The two's allways had an advantage in the number of men but the low body of their machine with the two wheeled hose reel fastened on behind the Engine made it a heavy drag while the No. one's machine set high on its wheels made it run much easier. One of the most noted races between the two Companies was the run to the Gilbert farm residence fire out on the old National Road and located where the City Park now is on East Wabash Street. This place at that time was some distance from the City limits and in

the Country at the time there was no houses East of ninth Street except the Rail Road depots, the National Road House, and a few scattered farm houses. The Gilbert farm house caught fire one cold Christmas day. The No. one's got a short lead on the No. two and ran East on Ohio Street while the No. two men ran to Wabash Street and got a dray and made fast and made good time to the bridge across the Canal at Ninth Street. Here they had to cast loose from the dray on account of the steep approach to the bridge at the east end. The two's now had a good hard road to the fire but just as they had passed the National Road House they discovered the No. one's cutting across the open Common on a short cut to the fire now nearby having crossed the Canal on the ice at Ohio Street and they were fully one hundred yards in the advance of the two's. The No. two's had about given up the race when suddenly the No. one's Engine went over on its side having run into a hole on the prairie. Capt Bryan gave a few of his unearthly but inspiring yells the two's men broke into a run got to the fire found a cistern got first water and soon had the fire out.

Another close race was a short one. The fire was on North

Second Street near Wabash Street. The No. one's were crossing Ohio Street running North to Wabash Street as the two's pulled out of the house. The two's turned into Ohio to third and to Wabash Streets. The two's were all of fifty feet from Wabash Street as the No. one's passed on a run. Bryan gave a howl the men jumped the rope passed the one's got the cistern at Second and Wabash streets and got first water. This race was so close that there was a dispute as to which Company had the cistern but the two's settled it by droping their suction into the Cistern and playing away. These are only specimens of the races that took place between the Companies. Sometimes the two's got left but usually won out.

In my opinion John A Bryan in his best days was the greatest Engine Captain in the department at any time. He could get more and better work out of the men either on the run or at the brakes. He allways did with all his might and knowledge whatever he undertook to do. Let it be firefighting, on the line of Battle, in the Press Room or throwing the mail.

Also in my opinion Joe Yates was the greatest Fire Chief the department ever had let it be volunteer or paid.

There was a great deal of hardships and considerable danger in the life of a fireman moreso for the volun-

-teer than the paid men. The latter being on duty at all times and trained to the work ought to be ablke to take care of himself better than the volunteer. There was also a social side to the life of a volunteer fireman. The Companies went on Parades, Excursions, to Pic Nics, gave Balls, Fairs and Festivals. Each Company gave at least one large annual Ball and had frequent dances in their houses.

There was a fire association composed of members of all the Companies. When each individual Fire fighter had served as an active fireman for one year he became a member of the Fire Association and became exempt from certain legal duties such as serving on juries & c. The Fire Association also gave entertainments in season.

The No. two's had a Dancing Club of about thirty couples and danced at their Fire Hall twice in each month during the winter. And the Company gave one large Annual Ball on each Christmas eve. At the Annual Balls at least one hundred couples would attend and Firemen from Indianapolis, Evansville, and Alton, Illinois were invited and attended these annual dances. And the two's would visit Companies and attend entertainments in those cities in return. music was furnished by the well know orchastra of the day of two pieces Gregg and Glazier.

But at the large Balls, Fairs and Festivals full Bands of Music were employed. The annual dances and large entertainments of the No.Two Company took place at Carrs Hall at the corner of fourth and Walnut Streets. The two's held a parade and pic nic on each fourth of July and went to some nearby grove for the day. (The two's had two very large men in its membership named "Pluggy" Evans and William McQuilkin – each weighed over three hundred pounds they were very active men and made good firemen – at parades these men acted as toungmen and was called Wheel Horses).

One notable pic nic was at Judge Gookins Grove was at Strawbury Hill [Strawberry Hill] at at about south third and Washington Streets and well out in the country at the time. After dinner that day the good old judge came to where the boys were enjoying themselves and after a short talk by the judge giving the boys some good advice the company on the invitation of the judge went to his residence nearby where his daughter Miss Lucy played on the Piano for some time for the entertainment of the red shirted firefighters.

There was an excursion by the Company with their machine to Paris, Illinois on the invitation of the Edgar County Fair Association where they had a good time. Gave an exibition Street run and a run and play of water at the

Fair Grounds to the great delight of the spectators but few of whom had ever seen a Fire Engine.

The two's had a pet dog named "Reub". This dog thought himself as much a fireman as any member of the Company. He originally belonged to William Smith at one time the Captain of the Company. "Reub" adopted the Company and lived at the Fire House. He was an odd looking animal small black curly haired with a white ring around the neck, white feet and white at the tip of tail. One ear pointed straight up and the other ear straight down. He took the lead at all runs to fires and parades and was the most conspicuous person at all the entertainments of the Company being decked out with ribbons in the National Colors.

I believe it was in the spring of 1860 that the No. two Company asked the City Council for an increase of the annual appropriation for Company expenses and which was refused by the Council. Upon which forty of the oldest firemen in the Company withdrew from the Company and organized the "Vigo Guards". The "Vigo Guards" afterwards on the breaking out of the Slaveholders Rebellion became Company "D" of the 11th Indiana Infantry Volunteers, the Lew Wallace Zouaves and served in the first three

months Call for Volunteers and reenlisted and served threwout the war, having enlisted as body all went to the front except one man and he had a good excuse.

The Terre Haute Volunteer Firemen took an active part in helping to put down the Rebellion.

"A throb of drums was in the air
and banners fresh from hand and loom
unfurl their glorious colors where
with head erect you proudly swear
to guard them through the Battles gloom."
Ben D House

Of the four hundred men in the old Terre Haute Volunteer Fire Department fully three hundred went fourth to fight their countrys Battles.
Some reached high rank
Many died on the Line of Battle.
Col M.D. Topping leading his men at Richmond, Ky,
Major Robert Brasher killed faceing the enemy
Captain John J.P. Blinn mortally wounded at Gettysburg sending his dieing message to his old friends to enlist and fight for their country.
Lieutenant William Mullen of the famous Eleaventh Regiment the life of the camp, killed at the head of his men

that day that Sheridan “sent them whirling through Winchester”
Lieutenant Jacob H. Jones of the Sixteenth Regiment - the bravest man I ever knew and I knew a lot, killed in Command of the skirmish line at Sabine Cross Roads, La.
The gallant Captain Frank Scott of the Eleaventh Regiment dieing at night on the far off prairies of Western Louisiana of disease that could kill but could not drive him from his post of duty.
And there was at least a score of men “behind the gun” all gallant soldiers who fell before the blast of Rebel bullits.

One of the last I want to make especial mention of here Bobby Gapin a beardless youth killed in the moment of victory with a captured rebel flag wraped around him.

But there were others of the old volunteer firefighters who died from disease in Hospital and at home no less glorious than those who died on the Line of Battle.

Those who survived and returned to their houses saw the Glory and the Terror of the Battlefield, the drowsy life in Camp. They left the longing for home and home associations, but they thanked God and their Pride they stood and saw it through, baptised in fire.

“Long may the deeds they have done be remembered
green be their laurels, undieing their fame,
our dear sacred Union, shall never be dismembered
while heroes like thse live to cherish its name”
Frank N Scott.

At least eight of the old volunteer firemen entered the Rebel Army. Three of them because they thought they belonged there – and five who happened to be living in the South on the breaking out of hostilities were told and led to believe that there would be no war only a pic nic as the Northern people would not fight. A mistaken idea, as many a bloody Battle field testified. One of the five saw it through and made a good Johny Reb. One other of the five deserted at first opertunity and enlisted in a loyal Louisiana Regiment and served his country faithfully throughout the war. One other of the five told the writer that he had belonged to Lovell's Division of the Rebel Army at Shiloh and that he had run away on the first day of the Battleand had kept going until he had got back to Terre Haute. The other two were among the prisoners of war at Vicksburg and were smugled up the River and back to Indiana by old firefighting friends in Grants Army. (By the Treaty of Surrender all the paroled prisoner of war were to be sent to the Rebel lines hence the smugling)

One of those who thought he belonged there rose to high rank in the Rebel Army. Being the Chief of Telegraph on the staff of General R.E. Lee the Rebel Commander in Chief. This man was a close and

intimate friend of the writer and we corresponded until the mails were closed to the South.

Perhaps there was a dozen of the old volunteer fire fighters who were called “Butternuts” during the war. These men as I understand it were loyal to the National Government but opposed the war believing that the questions at issue could be settled without bloodshed – a mistaken idea. I do know from experience that when soldiers returned home on leave or Furlough that these men met them with extended hand and saw to it that they had a good time while they remained.

The other members of the Department that did not go to the front had as a rule some good excuse for not doing so. Some were experts in the purchase of Army supplies and did good service in that way. I have no doubt that all did something towards putting down the Slaveholders Rebellion.

I have compiled as near as I could from memory a Roll of the members of the Vigo Fire Engine and Hose Company No. 2. Some names I could not recollect and these are necessary left out.

Adams, Neut	Beauchamp, Charles	Ellis, Henry
Arnold, Gus	Burnett, William	Evans, Pluggy
Alshuler, Mose	Bronson, Dave	Evans, Gran
Adams, John	Brown, Isaac M.	Estis, James
Albertson, Robert	Brasher, Robert	Finch, Silas
Ball, William	Campbell, Dr.	Fostor, Elonzo
Bannister, W.H.	Caughlan, Tom	Ferguson, Jas
Baty, James	Cotton, Dick	Fisher, William
Boyd, Geo	Crooks, Chas.	Fisher, Charles
Bell, John D.	Cook, Jack	Fuller, Frank
Barr, Wm	Cochran, Jas	France
Barr, Big Tom	Cochran, John	Gilmore, Chas
Barr, Bob	Calahan, Eugene	Grey, Al
Bryan, John A.	DeCamp, William	Gossett, Duck
Brown, Nesbet L.	Demorist, Christ	Gould, Delos
Burton, Wm	Denny, Lem	Gordon, Geo
Bennett, William	Dibble, Ira	Gilmore, Leon
Brasher, Tom	Dibble, Bob	Goodwin, Carl A.
Burns, John	Duvol, John	Grover, Geo
Buymer, Fru	Dengler, Ben	Gibbs, Sol
Buymer, Geo	Dole, William	Griffin, Mike
Baker, Jack	Eddy, Hat	Gosnell, Jack
Beauchamp, John	Eddy, Wils	
Beauchamp, James	Ellis, Jas	

Holden, William	Landis, Geo	Parsons, Alex
Herrington, John	Lupton, Wm	Parsons, Hillery
Harris, Zach	Lowerre, Tom	Parsons, Joe
Hennesy, Ed	McClean, Henry	Plannett, Geo
Hayward, Geo	McJunkin, Alex	Pearce, Isaac N.
Hayward, Ward	McCray, William	Printer, Wm
Hinton, Jas	McChesney, Joe	Purdy, Geo
Harper, Warren	McGovern, Tom	Patterson, Alex
Hebb, Ed	Murray, Ben	Reagin, Joe
Hebb, Dick	Manning, Wm	Roach, John
Henderson, Wm	McCrea, Jas	Robbins, Wil
Hyde, John	Murphy, Ed	Robbins, Frank
Huber, Jacob	McCush, John	Roseman, Frank
Jeffries, Rie	McMullen, Harry	Romine, Jourd
Jones, Jacob H.	McCush, Wm	Ross, Zach
Johnson, Ed	Mullen, Wm	Redford, Frank
Jean, Jas H	McElfresh, Henry	Rea, Wal
Knight, Neut	McQuilkin, Wm	Ray, Wm
Kuder, Dr Jake	Messer, John	Ruggles, Chas
Kizer, Pete	Messer, William	Rector, John
Knapp, Geo	Martin, Frank	Reaves, Cash
King, John	McFadden, Make	Reed, Dan
	O'Marra, James	Reed, Dave

Robbins, Henry	Smith, Mart V.	Wells, Norm
“Reub” The Pet Dog	Sanderson, Bert	Welch, Andy
Scudder, Will	Serrin, Geo	Welch, John
Scudder, John	Stewart, Tom	Wright, Joe
Smith, Jabez	Spicer, F.H.	Wyeth, Lon
Stevens, Ed	Smith, Chas Jr	Wyeth, Geo
Stevens, John	Tillotson, Ed	Watson, Chas
Smith, Col Chas	Townsend, Lon	Wharry, Jas
Smith, William	Tiernan, Dick	Wharry, Geo
Stevenson, Dr John G.	Teneicke, Tom	Wheatfil, Jas
Stone, Sam	Tuller, Geo	Wright, Will
Shoemaker, Abe (abe)	Voorhees, Jake	Yates, Joe
Shoemaker, Geo	Voris, Jerry	
Schloss, Philip	Vance, Tom	Nehf, Chas
Sykes, John	Vanscoyce, Mose	
Scott, Robt	Winter, Garrett	
Scott, Geo	Watson, D.W.	
Scott, James	Wilkins, John E.	
Scott, Merritt	Wilkerson, John	
Strawn, Ed	Wells, Tom	

Some
Recollections of my Boyhood and Manhood days
other than my Military life and
Services as a Volunteer Fireman

By

John E Wilkins

Terre Haute – Indiana.

Among my first recollections is in connection with Political meetings – one in 1844 a great mass meeting and Barbacue in Farrington Grove and another in the same place in 1848, and one at earlys Grove in 1852. All these were Whig gatherings and the people came on horseback and in wagons by the thousand. Some from a distance of a hundred miles. at these great Barbacues whole Oxen, Hogs and Sheep were roasted whole and the cooks would be for days doing the cooking to feed the great multitudethat would attend these gatherings.

About 1844 also I saw my first steamboat it landed at Arnolds Ferry just west of Prairieton and was called the Plow Boy and said to be the second boat to ascent the Wabash River. I went with others to see the wonder and while standing on the bank nearby the engineer let off steam by way of the mudpipe with great roar. We thought the boat was about to explode its boiler and we took to our heels our curiosity perfectly satisfied. Afterwards in the early 50s I saw great Ohio and Mississippi Steamers laying at the Terre Haute landing from Ohio to Poplar Street as thick as could lay alongside each other unloading Rail Road Iron and Merchandize and loading Corn, Pork, and other produce – some of the boats so large

that they had to anchor out in the stream and throw the iron into the water and when the water run down the iron was loaded into wagons and hauled to the Rail Road.

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I have seen some great fleets of steamboats and steamships in my day at the wharves of Chicago, Cleaveland, Buffalo, Boston, New Orleans, Baltimore, Washington City, Louisville, Cincinnati, Memphis, Pittsburgh and St. Louis besides great fleets of War Ships during the War of the Rebellion. during the War I saw fleets of from fifty to one hundred steamboats of all kinds and capacity crowded with troops of all arms composing whole armies several times. Also a great fleet of sixty magnicent Steamships loaded with troops. I was in St. Louis in the spring of 1856 during the great emigration to Kansas and Nebraska. It was estimated that twenty thousand families passed the city on Steamers and up the Missouri River during the three months I was there. The movement and activity along the River was wonderful. The boats lay side by side with only the bows inshore for more than a mile along the levee – coming in and going out constantly and on shore a seething mass of

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humanity from morning until night – perhaps no such a sight was ever witnessed before or since. The greatest activity on the Wabash River was perhaps about 1851. Vast quantities of Pork, Corn, and other produce went out of the river that year on steam boats and flat boats. It is said that seventeen hundred flat boats went out of the River that year.

I have seen three great comets in my time. the first I believe was in 1843 or 4, the second in 1861 and the third in 1891.

The John H Watson money.

Judge John H. Watson was a professional gambler and he sometimes dabbled in the Law. In the late forties he issued a great quantity of one and two dollar notes resembling bank bills. These notes has no security whatever. I do not believe Judge Watson owned a dollars worth of reat estate. But the people for fifty miles around Terre Haute had such confidence in Watsons honesty that they preferred Watson money rather than the notes of any bank or even Gold or Silver coin. The knew that Watson money was not counterfiet and was affraid the other might be. It was a common thing for the farmers to ask for Watson money in lieu of any other.

In the late forties and early fifties great four horse Pedling wagons made their head quarters in Terre Haute. These pedling wagons would hold as many goods as an ordinary store of that day and were driven in every direction for fifty miles trading with the farmers and Citizens of the little towns and would return loaded down with pelts of wild animals , Beeswax, Feathers, Dried fruits, Medicinal roots, and other produce traded for. some of these Pedlars made large fortunes.

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In the early fifties I made a trip to lafayette by way of the wabash and Erie Canal on Canal Pocket my first and last Canal boat ride. The State Fair was being held at Lafayette and the town was full of people and one had to push and pull to get to a dineing table at the Hotels. I had found some fairly good cigars and had bought a bunch of twenty five and stuck them in my overcoat pocket. after I had made a rush with the balance of the hogs and had my dinner I put my hand into my pocket to get a cigar, and lo, they were gone. In the crush to get to the table I had been robed. I mention this from the fact that in all my nocking around the world and being in all kinds of crowds and places it was the only time I was ever robed, which I think remarkable.

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My first pic nic was in 1847. It was a May Day festival of the Henry Teel School on North Third Street. A may Queen had been selected and the School marched in procession across the Common to Jas Millers Orchard at about Second and Sycamore Streets where the day was spent in a ceremonious Crowning of the May Queen. A nice dinner spred on the ground and songs and speaking and games of various kinds, a real old fashioned English May day.

It must have been on a fourth of July in the middle forties that I saw my first military procession. It consisted of a Dragoon Company of about twenty men and an Infantry Company of the same number of men with one drum and one fife in the shape of a band. I dont know but that it made as great an impression on my immagination at that time as some of the great Armies I witnessed during the Civil War. my second Military Specktakle was at Cincinnati on a 22nd of February Celebration of Washingtons Bearthday – I believe it was in 1859. There were some forty military organizations in the Column from various Cities throughout the Country. these were as a rule Crack Companies and noted for drill. appearance & c. Each Company had its distinctive uniform. The Comp

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nies that attracted my attention were the German Turner Battalion, the Guthrie Greys Battalion, the Kenton Rangers, the Crocket Rangers, the Cumberland Md Continentals, the Law Greys of Baltimore, the Cleaveland Dragoons, and the St. Louis National Guards. The latter Company passed through Terre Haute on the way to Cincinnati and will state to show the Rail Road accomodations of that day. That this Company was three days going from St. Louis to Cincinnati – there was no connections between the roads in those days. The St. Louis Company went as far as Vincennes the first day on the Ohio and Mississippi Rail Road only completed that far and had to stay over night there and take a train to Terre Haute on the Evansville and T.H. to Terre Haute and here had to stay over night to get a train to Indianapolis and Cincinnati the next morning.

In the early fifties the great Pork packing houses of Terre Haute were at their best and as they shiped altogether by River I have seen hundreds of barrels of pork and lard piled up in open sheds on the bank of the River for weeks awaiting shipment and no one so much as thought that a barrel would be stolen.

I recollect when a steam Boat landed at third and Chestnut Streets and loaded with corn for New Orleans. This must have been in 1848. Before the canal was built a great hollow run from the River to third and Chestnut Streets. And when the River was at flood the water would back up through this hollow to third street. This hollow was the outlet for a stream that passed through the Central part of town and drained the teritory from the ridge at Seventh Street to the River and when there were heavy rains this stream would overflow at 4th Street between Eagle and Chestnut Streets and I have seen stage horses on their way to the stage barns on fourth and fifth streets and North of Chestnut swim for some distance in this overflowed stream.

Speaking of stages I recollect my first and only journey in one of those old lumbering leather springed affairs. Charley Whitman and I took stage one noon for our first journey from home. There were no improved or graveled roads in those days. now and then at swamps and low pieces of ground and attempt had been made to make roads paaable by what was called Cordaroyingby cutting small trees and laying them alongside each other so as to make it possable to get across and everything that did cross went bumpety all the way over and it frequently hap-

pened that the passengers in a stage coach had to get out and get a rail from the nearest fence and standing in the mud knee deep help to pry the stage out of a chuck hole. we found the mud and chuck holes deep and frequent and we were all the afternoon and all night getting to Vincennes and when we alighted from the Stage in the morning it was about all we could do to stand up we were so tired and sore from the jolting over the rough roads. The Evansville and Terre Haute Rail Road was just finished to Vincennes at that time and we now took our first car ride. We were four hours in going from Vincennes to Evansville

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but that was fast enough for us as we were bad enough scared at that. We arrived in Evansville just in time to take passage on the great new Steamer Eclipse the largest boat that had ever been built up to that time for River use. The Eclipse was making her first round trip from Louisville to New Orleans and return. It was our first Steamboat ride and it was fime and we enjoyed it. We had to disembark at Portland and take Carriage to Louisville as the Eclipse was so large that she could not get through the canal around the falls. We had a sight at Portland of the noted giant [illegible]

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raise up with the load extended [illegible – portion of sentence in crease at top of page] derful feat ans was done as an advertisment for Porters Saloon of Portland. On our arrival at Louisville we found the streets crowded with a great mob and we were now to witness our first Riot. It appeared that a School Teacher had punished a small boy by the name of Ward belonging to a wealthy and so called aristocratic family of the city. Mat Ward the boys brother had gone to the School House and deliberately and in cold blood shot dead the School Master. The excited people were now looking for the murderer to lynch him and who was in hideing. We joined the crowd out of mere curiosity as they moved down a street to the Ward residence which was searched and then fired. The firemen came with their Engines but the mob cut the hose as fast as it was laid. Charley and I had taken a position high up on some church steps and were enjoying the show but we did not feel so good when we saw a Company of Soldiers marching down the street. But the Soldiers refused to fire on the mob and we began to feel all right again when a section of Artillery unlimbered and took position up the street. Fortunately just then a cry arose that the Steamer Robert J Ward was coming into port and

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away went the crowd for the River where they soon wrecked the Ward family Steamer – just arrived. Our curiosity was satisfied and we did not follow. We viewed the city during that day and night and next morning we took passage on the regular mail steamer for Cincinnati. The Packet Steamboats in those days were magnificent vessels regular floating palaces. We had a good look around the Queen City and returned to Terre Haute by Rail Road by way of Indianapolis having had a fine trip. a journey like that and at that day was considered as great a feat as a trip to Europe at this time.

In our school boy days our great and favorite game was shinney. On Saturdays we would gather on the Common west of the unoccupied Prairie House (later the “Terre Haute”) at Seventh and Wabash Streets. There was usually a crowd of fifty or more young men and boys . Our leaders would choose sides and we would play the game with bounds extending from the Prairie House to Schalls Bakery on the alley east of fourth street – north side – a distance of about twelve hundred feet and there was so many players so eavenly divided that it sometimes took all day to play a single game.

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I wonder how many persons are alive today (1910) who recollets the old Oil Mill that stood on the alley between fourth and fifth streets and Ohio and WabashStreets. This mill was run by a great tread wheel, about forty feet in diameter and the motive power were oxen. The wheel stood at an angle the uper side being about twenty feet from the ground and the Oxen would tread on this wheel allways going up but never reaching the top as the wheel kept going around and around.

There was a distillery at the foot of Cherry Street on the bank of the River and a Grist Mill on South Seventh Street with the same kind of a tread wheel as a motive power.

And the first oysters brought to Terre Haute. It was just after the canal was openedthat about the last boat from the north before the close of navigation brought and landed at Brittons Warehouse two barrels of shell oysters. There was nothing to show to whom the oysters were consigned and as nobody claimed them the barrels and Oysters were placed in an open shed adjoining the warehouse. The only person who would touch them was Squire Noble and he would go up to the warehouse of an evening and eat his fill of oysters until all were gone. I wonder how long two barrels of oysters would remain at the present day under an open shed

I dont know that people were more honest then than at the present day but I do know that punishment was sure and swift at that time. The crimes in those days that gave the most trouble was horse stealing and counterfeiting. The horse thieves had a perfect organization and had regular lines to travel on with hideing places for the stolen horses all along the routes. One of these lines passed north of town on the old Greencastle Road and there was a hideing station in Nevens township. The man who kept this station was a well know and well to do farmer, and at that time unsuspected. He had a large barn on the side of a hill and an underground stable was dug out of and under the hill. Here horses being run off would be hid during the daytime and run to the next station across the River the next night. It was certain that the ferryman at Durkees Ferry must have been in with the thieves . Another line passed through Sullivan County and crossed the River at York, Illinois. After a sufficient number of horses would be got together at some point in Illinois they would be taken south and sold. Also at York there was a gang of counterfeiters that had a cave on an Iseland in the River where they made there coin . A raid was made on the gang at York and some horse

thieves and two of the counterfeiters were captured and placed in the Terre Haute jail, and through them I had the scare of my life. My father was the Sheriff of Vigo County at that time (1851) and the jail was at third and Walnut Streets. There were but two cells for prisoners in the jail and sometimes there were more than a half a dozen of prisoners in each cell. The Counterfeiters were placed in the back cell with four other prisoners. They had some money and were allowed to send out and purchase such things as Tobaco, fruits & c. And I used to make these purchases for the prisoners. At one time some peuter spoons that the prisoners had used were missing but the prisoners accounted for them by saying that they had accidently been droped in the vault. one prisoner had got a knuckle out of joint or said he had and wanted some plaster of Paris to make a mould to keep it in shape until well. Another prisoner said he had a chill and a bottle of medicine was got for him and now these two Counterfeiters had plaster, pewter and glass and no one suspected anything. pretty soon they began to give me half dollars and I wondered why as they had so many quarters that they never sent them out. One day something was wanted

at a hardware store and I went to Potters and there was no foolinbg old man Potter. He knew as soon as he got his finger on that half dollar that it was counterfeit. A search of the cell disclosed the mould and a lot of Counterfeit half dollars hidden in one of the bed ticks. And I was scared stiff. I thought that I would have to go to the States Prison sure for passing those half dollars.

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An early recollection was when the forty niners were pulling out for California with their four and six Ox teams for the overland route across the Plains. And all of us youngsters resolved that as soon as we were old enough we would go overland across the plains kill a lot of Indians and then become gold diggers in California.

But later when we would see some fifteen or twenty Stage Coaches come dashing into town the four horse teams on a full run and rounding up at the hotels with whips cracking and bugles blowing a lively tune we changed our minds about the future and concluded to be stage drivers and to be fully prepared for the work the south end boys established Post Offices and a Stage line throughout the neighborhood . Some of the boys were post masters, some horses and some drivers. I was a Post Master and had an Office in the Jail

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stable third and Walnut streets. And well do I remember the four passing steeds come dashing up to my office with the mail on Saturday afternoons.

Our schools in those days were subscription schools and any person good, bad or indifferent that could get a lot of pupils subscribed could hire a room and go to work. The Teachers that I recollect were all intelligent and educated and competent to teach in those days except one, a man by the name of Frost who had a school in the Universalist Church then at 4th and Ohio Streets. He was not only incompetent but objectionable in other ways So four of us older Schollars concluded to run that school and we did for a while. what they did not do to that teacher must have been something they could not think of. One of the tricks played on him was to place a wounded owl in his desk and after the morning session had opened and the Teacher opened his desk out flew the Owl in his face. He was so badly scared that he started to run but caught his foot in some way and went sprawling into the middle of the school room floor amid shouts of laughter of the pupils. there was not much learned that day in that school.

The School Room was in the basement of the Church

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and to get into the school room one had to go down a few steps into s dark entry. One Monday morning when Frost unlocked the outer door and steped down into the dark room he found himself in the midst of a dozen squealing pigs . And again there was a badly frightened man and he got out of there in a hurry. Frost had to hunt up some men to take those pigs out and the school had a half holiday. The back yard of the church was used as a play ground and was as smooth and hard as a floor. One Monday morning when Frost and the School arrived it was found that every desk, seat and bench had been removed from the School room and placed in perfect order on the playground. The Teachers seat and desk in their proper placeand everything ready for business – and the school had another half holiday.

But the combine of four overdid it when they brought a wagon load of mellons into the School room during session hours and cutting each mellon in half placed a half on the desk of each pupil and did not forget the Teacher. But this time the worm turned. And Frost called a meeting of the fathers of the four and

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After consultation decided on which was the leader of the four and he was taken out of the school and the others were notified of what would happen to them if they did not behave themselves. But the fun went on but the combine took good care not to get found out or caught at it.

About this time some of the larger boys in our end of town organized a Robin Hood band. Each of the sixteen members of the band took or assumed the name of some one of Robin Hoods men. I was the third officer of the band and my assumed name was “Will Scarlet”. We had two members who were handy with tools and they made our bows and arrows. And very good ones they were and we soon became expert in their use and could kill quail and squirrel with them at ease. Each member wore a a broad red ribbon across his breast from shoulder to hip with his assumed name printed thereon. And with a long feather in hat and a quiver full of arrows slung from shoulder we used to prowl through Farringtons Woods south of Oak and East of third Streets and a heavy piece of timber south of Cruft and west of third Streets looking for red deer and many an unfortunate pig would run

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Off squealing for looking to much like a red deer. There was a great Oak tree at least six foot in diameter that stood near third and Cruft Streets. Here was our trysting place where we would meet and our Leader would settle all our little differences.

We also made frequent marches to old Fort Harrison. There we would lay aside our Robin Hood Costume and don a few more feathers and daub our faces with black mud and we became a band of Tecumsehs Indians.

At that time all that was left of old Fort Harrison was a part of an old block house that a neighboring farmer had been using as a shelter for cattle but it had got so delapidated and tumble down as to be dangerous and had been abandoned. We (the Indians) would extend ourselves out in a long line on the River bank and carefully crawling up through the bushes for fear that some of the garrison of the fort would hear us and give the alarm and with blood curdling yells we would make fierce attacks on that old delapidated block house stable pouring into it such shower of arrows that it was a wonder we did not riddle the old thing.

After we would tire of that kind of sport we would disrobe and mount an old forty foot flat boat gunnel and presto we would become American Man od War’s men

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And we would go cruising for British vessels until some jolly tar would commence to rock the gunnel and others would join in and soon the whole Ships Crew would be in the River. And then it would be for dinner. Details would be sent to find and kill quail and squirrel as at that time they were abundant in the neighborhood other details went to catch fish, Black bass mind we would have no other, and others to set the fire going. There was a deep hollow leading from the canal to the River and among other trees in the hollow was a large red haw tree with a dense foleage on this tree we kept hung up and securely hid a frying pan, A coffee pot, and such other utensils as we needed in cooking our game and fish. Also in that hollow we had built an oven out of flat rocks, and we were all fair cooks. We allways took with us on such trips such necessaries as bread, salt, pepper, and such other stuff as we needed in our cooking. Except butter. And this we bought from a neighboring farm house. A great chunk of yellow treasure. And eat you ought to seen that gang eat. No tired old soldiers just off a long march could have equaled them.

And as for that old fort, those boys knew as much about that old fort as anyone then or now (1910). We made

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It our business to get a complete history of the old fort and there were plenty of people alive in the fifties that had known the fort from the time it had been abandoned by the Government until demolished. And if those boys were alive to day they would be with me in stating that all the logs on Gods footstool left of old Fort Harrison was in that old Block House Stable. They could also tell you that there were several old log cabins in the neighborhood of the old fort site in the early fifties but no one in those days thought of claiming that their Cabins was built of the logs of the old Fort. These people evidently did not know what a bonanza there was in having or pretending to have, something to sell to the state or nation for perhaps ten times its value. Anyone who ever saw a log and stockade fort would see the absurdity of such a claim as is now put forth by a citizen of Terre Haute. When I was on the Plains and frontier in the late sixties I have seen and been in at least twenty log and stockade forts on the Solomon, the little and big Blue, the Republican and the head waters of the Smoky Hill Rivers and I doubt recollect that in any of them did I see a cabin that could be removed and converted into a dwelling.

Those boys could also tell you that the Republican Party had a great mass meeting in 1856 on the prairie near where

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The old Fort stood and during the Fremont Campaign. And that Chauncey Rose employed Gus Chamberlain a Boss carpenter to look up some sound pieces of the old Fort to be made into canes to be presented to the speakers and prominent men in attendance at the meeting. And that Chamberlain tore down the old Block House Stable and got three pieces that was sound enough for the purpose and were made into canes. And that it was anounnced at that time that this was the last of the old Fort.

The following is an extract from a Communication in the July No. 1892 (I believe) of the Magazine of American History in reference to Fort Harrison.

“Traces of the fortification existed here as late as the fifties and the block houses were preserved nearly intact until 1849 after these disappeared the old rotten logs were for a long time to be seen lying about the old site, but for years the only thing that has served to define the location of the fort is the well now in the last stages of disuse.”

This information came from Dr Swafford and was given to A.C. Duddleson. Dr Swafford lived in the neighborhood across the river from the old fort and took great interest in its historyand perhaps knew more than anyone else about the old fort.

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Our Robin Hood Band lasted until we outgrew it and we did not like to give it up as we had so much fun out of it. All the boys in the band were National Soldiers during the war of the rebellion and helped to fight the Battles of their Country. Some fell on the line of Battle bravely sustaining their Countrys cause, Other returned home to die of disease. And so far as I know and believe that I am the only survivor of that Robin Hood Band. (1910)

I was very fond of hunting and fishing and in the early fifties belonged to a fishing club of a half dozen members. We had a vaery good and substantial boat and we fished at every opportunity. Our fishing ground was the north side of the mouth of Suger Creek and across the River from Town. On one day we would go to some neighboring creek and catch from twelve to fifteen dozen of suitable minnows for bait. The next day would be fishing day for black Bass, we would have no other. And at that time black bass of a large size weighing from two to eight lbs each were abundant in the Wabash River. We would start out in our boat at daylight and drop down to the mouth of the creek and set our poles. Each one of us would have from four to six long cane poles with two hooks to each line and

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Sometimes in the early morning it would keep us hoping to answer our bites. We had here also a tree pantry for our cooking utensils and at noon a detail would be made to dress and cook a lot of fish for dinne. And again was there a lot of eating done. One would think we were half starved at home. In the late evening we would row our boat back to town with a string of from twenty to thirty fine black Bass so heavy that on landing they had to be carried slung on a pole cut for the purpose and resting on our shoulders. A tired but happy bunch of fishermen.

We had fun a plenty in those days and it does not appear to me that the young folks nowdays have as good a time and enjoy themselves as we used to do. It is true the poputation is so much greater now than at that time that they cannot wander around at their will as we did without interuption.

A short time ago I saw a news item about a man who had performed a great feat by catching two fish on a set line with two hooks that ought to be common and of frequent occurrence that is what the two jooks is for. Now if he had caught two fish on one hook that would have been quite a different proposition. That is just what happened to me once upon a time. In the early seventies

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I was working in the Office of Judge John P Usher who was the Attorney of the Kansas [Union crossed out] Pacific Rail Road and had his office at Lawrence Kansas and about August in each year I used to take a vacation and go hunting for Buffalo and big game in the Northern part of the state but in August 1872 I run down to South West Missouri where I had an uncle living for a fishing and hunting trip on the Little Osage River and near Ft. Scott, Kas. At that time there were very few settlers in that section and game was abundant and the fishing fine. My cousin and I sometimes took out on our hand and pole lines in a single day two or three hundred lbs of fish and which my uncle salted down for future use. On the occasion I spoke of we had set our lines as usual for the night and the next morning I found that I had a fish that I had some difficulty in landing . But I finally made it and found that I had a Cat fish that weighed twenty lbs and on trying to take the hook out of its mouth again found that the Cat fish had swallowed a two lb perch that had caught on the hook before the Cat fish came along and then swallowed the pearch. We had to cut off the jaw of the cat to get the pearch out.

While on this trip an incident happened which may be of interest. One day while we were engaged in fishing

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We heard a great poping of revolver shots up and on the other side of the River and presently we saw two men on horseback spuring their horses on a full run down the River and soon after came twelve or fifteen men also with their horses at full speed in pursuit of the two first horsemen. We learned shortly after that the two men were two of the Younger brothers with a sheriff’s posse in pursuit. The Youngers found a dense piece of undergroth and dismounting hid their horses and doubling back on their pursuers keeping close along the bluff a half mile from the River and made their escape. The sheriffs posse after hunting for half a day finally found the horses and the manner of the outlaws escape and gave up the pursuit.

This telling of the Younger outlaws reminds me of an amusing incident in connection with outlaws that happened to me when I was living in Savannah, Missouri, near St. Joe, but perhaps it may be of interest to relate how I came to be in North West Missouri among the out laws in the late sixties.

In the summer of 1868 General Lew Wallace purchased from the War Department twenty five thousand Springfield muskets . And rumor had it that

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General Wallace was going to raise an Army Corp of Northern and Southern veterans of the Civil War for service in Cuba where an insurrection against the Spanish Government had just broken out. There was a Cuban agent in Indianapolis and a lot of us went to see him to get the facts. He assured us that General Wallace was to have command of an Army Corps of Veterans of the late war to assist the Cubans in gaining their independence. And that men were leaveing daily for Cuba from Mobile, so twenty five of us accepted transportation to Mobile, the Head Quarters of the Cuban Revolutionists in the United States. Everything had to be done very quietly and secretly to prevent our government from interfearing. We found a two masted sailing vessel ready to sail with as cargo of Arms and Amunition. And after receiving two hundred dollars in gold as a bounty from the Cuban agent here we embarked on this vessel and set sail for the Iseland. We attempted to effect a landing on the West coast of the Iseland but were driven off by a Spanish Gun Boat and in spite of the fact we had a fast sailor under us we were chased all the way across the Gulf. And our captain to save his cargo from Confisication by the United States Authorities beached his vessel at the mouth of the

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Rio Grande near Brownsville. We now had enough of the Cuban revelution as we learned here that the Arms purchased by General Wallace was for the Mexicans and not the Cubans. One day during the chase across the Gulf the Spanish Gun Boat got near enough to fire a few shots that went wide as their marksmanship was bad. The Captain of our vessel issued to each one of us from the arms on board a spencer carbine and a Remingron Revolver with one hundred rounds of ammunition for each. What he expected us to do with them I do not know as the Gun Boat would have shot us all to pieces if she had got near enough and we did not surrender. At any rate we had them and we now kept them as we did not know what would happen next and they would come mighty handy in case of trouble. Six of us concluded to go overland to the Missouri River. One of our number was a Texan and had been a Ranger and an old Indian fighter and he knew a route across country that he had traveled time and again and was acquanted with every foot of it and although it was through a country swarming with hostile Apache and Comanche Indians there were places known to him where we could make stands if necessary, and cut offs through the foothills

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and mountains to avoid the hostiles. We purchased for each one of us a rideing pony and a pack mule for the party. Our leader also purchased a lot of rubber shoes and stiffened the soles with heavy leather and by an ingenious arrangement of straps and buckles they could be fastened onto the feet of the ponies and the mule - reversed – so that the tracks would look like a party of men going the other way with mocasins on. But these shoes were only to be used in a case of emergancy and on disciscovering dangerous Indian signs . We took up our line of march up the Rio Grande to the Pecos River and here we had our only trouble with the Indians. We had seen frequent signs of Indians and every few hours some one of us would ride to some elevation on the line of march and scan the country with a powerful glass that we carried. about a half days march up the Pecos about a dozen Indians in War Bonnets were seen some five miles off and coming our way at full speed of their ponies. They had either crossed our trail or had discoered us from some high elevation as they are said to have eyes like a hawk and they were evidently intending to make an attack. Our guide and leader knew of a safe place of refuge nearby in the neighboring hills where we could stand them off until dark and then make a quick get away by a safe

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route known to him. and we now made a quick march and got to our place of defence about an hour of sunset. It was up a narrow ravine the entrance about twenty feet wide and obstructed with large rocks so that we had some difficulty in getting our animals into the ravine and the sides of the ravine rose to a great hight perhaps three hundred feet and no secure place for an enemy to get a foothold to command the ravine with their rifle fire. We hobbled our mounts far up the ravine at a point out of reach of the enemies rifle fire from the outside and took up a position behind the big rocks at the entrance. It was not long before the warriors made their appearance advancing cautiously up the trail and we opened a carbine fire at close range and thought we had got the two advanced savages. The others disappeared like a flash of lightning and what became of them we did not know as contrary to what I expected they did not open fire on our position. so we huged our rocks as close as posable and waited for developments. Jack our leader said that they would not likely bother us before night and then crawl up and try to carry our position with a rush. He sent one of the men back to put the ruber shoes on the anamils so that they would

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not make a noise when we got ready to slip away. As soon as dark fell we made our way up the ravine on foot leading our ponies as well as we could in the dark for about six miles and came to an out let through the foothills at about midnight as we had to travil slowly on account of the darkness and the rough trail and as it was all of us was more or less bruised and skined in places from rough falls. We traveled all that night over a trail through the foothills and in the morning stoped for an hour to give the animals a rest, feed and water and we eat a lunch but did not dare build a fire or smoke a pipe as it is said those Texas Indians can smell smoke for a mile. We pushed on all the next day with only short haults for rest and the second morning we took post on a high elevation and rested all A.M. We could see for several miles in all directions and as we could see no signs of Indians we felt sure we had thrown them off the track and we ventured to light our pipes and they tasted might good. We now proceeded leisurely on our way up the Pecos. Keeping a bright lookout as became old soldiers until we came to that terable desert known as the Staked Plan [Plain]. Our guide took us to a point where we could make a shorter journey across the desert than by the regular

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route. We were ten days crossing and although the heat was terrific at times we did not suffer excessively. We saw but little animal life except rattlesnakes, great black spiders, centipedes, horned toads and now and then a grey wolf. An amusing incident happened one morning just as the cook was beating an oldpan trying to get the boys up to breakfast when one of the boys threw the blankets in ever direction and shouted rattlesnake and the rest of us was preparing to get out of harms way when on looking down on the blankets we discovered a harmless horned toad which looked about as badly scared as the other fellow. The toad in hoping about had hoped into the mans face hence the alarm. After crossing the desert we pushed on until about noon we came to a wooded branch of the Canadian River. We waded up this stream to cover our tracks for about two miles until we came to a good camping ground with good grass for the stock in a nearby hollow that we could enclose at the ends without much trouble and we turned the animals loose to feed at will. There was a high elevation nearby where a good look out for hostiles could be kept. We rested here for a week hunting, fishing and of evenings smoking our pipes around the Camp fire and listening

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to stories of adventure as told by our guide and leader who said his name was John Omahundro but was better known as “Texas Jack”. Jack had been a famous scout for the rebel Armies during the great war and before the war was a member of Walkers Company of Texas Rangers and had seen much service. And he told us of his adventures and narrow escapes in Army scouting, and his ranger fights with Indians, Mexican bandits, and Cattle Rustlers. He impressed me as truthful and sincere in his statements and we enjoyed the relation of his adventures. After our weeks rest we pushed on to Santa Fe where we stoped a few days to see the place as it was a great curiosity to most of us. The buildings being of adobe and built after the Mexican plan – the Inhabitants nearly all Mexicans and half breeds and spoke a mongrel Spanish and Indian dialect. Some half civilized Indians came into town every day but I am not sure as to the tribe they belonged to but think they were Pueblos. We joined a government wagon train here as they were going our way and we pushed on to Pueblo and from ther to Denver at that time a small town with no promise of the fine city of the present day. From Denver we struck east to the Smoky Hill River and down that stream to Fort Riley without further adventure

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of note we had a good time hunting and fishing but got no big game as we did not think it safe to leave the Smoky Hill route to look for Buffalo as there were plenty of Indian Sign and allthough the Arapahoe and Cheyenne’s were supposed to be at peace they were treacherous and not to be trusted. The weather was fine and we had a good time generally. Through all this journey and outside the Towns we passed through a wilderness teeming with animal and bird life. We only occasionally came to a lone dug out or frontier stockade where some trapper or hunter had a temporary home or a few setlers families were collected for protection from the Indians. Now and then we met a freight or Government Wagon train now and then and occasionally a lone scout or detachment of Cavalry from some of the forts along the route. People nowadays crossing the states of Kansas or Colorado in rail road cars can have no idea of what the great plains were before civilation took possession . There was something grand and awesome about it that cannot be described. It did not seem to be lonesome as one would be apt to think the whole country was alive with animal life and birds was everywhere so that one dod not have any inclination to feal

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lonesome. As we reached Fort Riley there was a sudden and great change in the weather high winds and snow flurries indicated that winter was at hand. We felt ourselves fortunate that we had got through when we did as it was no joke to get caught on those wild wastes in a blizzard. We sold our ponies, pack mule and carbines to the Post Quarter Master at Fort Riley and “Texas Jack” took employment with the government as a scout. (I have never doubted that this man was what he represented himself to be the true “Texas Jack” of that day. A number of “Texas Jacks” has made their appearance now and then claiming to be the true “Texas Jack” but the were undoubtedly frauds as John Omahundro died fully thirty years ago. A Southern writer Joel Harris I believe used the same name as one of his characters in histories of the Civil War and I have no doubt that harris Scout and Spy was one and the same man who led us through the wilderness).

The Kansas Pacific Rail Road had just been completed to this pointbut the road bed was in such an incomplete condition that trains would not be run during the winter ans I boarded the last train to leave for the East and we arrived at Leavenworth at midnight of the second day as the progress

Was necessarily slow over the new road. It was extremely cold – the River was runing ice the day

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Before and this night it froze from bank to bank and the ice had gorged oposite the town and was piled up twenty feet high. And as there was not a bridge across the Missouri River at that time the military engineers and the Sappers and Miners at Fort Leavenworth had to blast a road through the ice across the River to enable the Postal authorities to get the mail to the Missouri Valley Rail Road Station on the other bank of the River. I crossed and made my way to St Joe and there I learned that my old Regimental commander Colonel Robert Conover was in business at Savannah in Andrew County sixteen miles north. I proceeded there and the next morning I went to work for Captain William Caldwell as his Chief deputy in the Circuit Clerk and Recorders Office of Andrew County and that is how I came to be in Savannah. At that time Northwest Missouri was seathing nest of out laws more especially in Clay County. The broken men of both Armies left over from the Rebellion. There were men of Quantrell’s and kindred bands scattered all over that section of the Country. And the bitter hatred of the Union men and late Rebels broke out ever now and then in murder and all kinds of outrages. Every body went armed and ready to draw and use weapons at a moments notice. It was

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a common thing for half a dozen men to be called to their door in a single night and shot down in cold blood – both sides were doing it – Circuit Judge Zparker did finally break up the habit of carrying arms everywhere. In the first court that I attended in January 1869 not less than six hundred men came into court with not less than two big revolvers straped on in plain view. There was several bands of well organized outlaws such as the Younger brothers, the James Brothwers, the Williams Gang and others of less note. These men were commiting robery and murder all over North West Missouri. After committing some great outrage they would take refuge in Clay County where they were watched over and protected by the citizens who sympatized with or were affraid of them. Large rewards were offered for their capture dead or alive and scores of detectives and others went into Clay County to effect their capture that was never heard of againno doubt murdered by the outlaws or their friends. I came into contact with these people twice. Once when the Williams gang raided the Bank in Savannah and shot Judge McLean the President of the bank and who had put up a fight. I joined the citizens in driving the robers out of the town. And it is wonderful how many shots can be fired by men ocoustomed to the use of firearms

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without hiting anyone. In this case hundreds of shots were fired and so far as known only one took effect. As the robbers were passing the house of Captain Caldwell young Jim Caldwell ran out with a carbine and taking aim over the gate post fired and one of the robbers was seen to drop his guns and catch the mane of his horse to prevent falling off. And later we learned that he had died in Kansas. The robbers after fighting their way out of town escaped into the Missouri River bottoms across the River into Kansas. The other time was when I was in business at Gallatin, Davies County, Mo, the County seat. The Gallatin Bank was about two hundred feet north west of my place of business and across the street. At that time a single shot fired ina North Missouri town would cause the citizens to turn out with the nearest available weapon and ready for a fight. One foggy afternoon I was startled by the sound of two muffled reports and my instant thought was Bank and robbers. I ran behind my counter and got a short derringer out of the money drawer and then to the door. What had happened was about like this. It was about 4 P.M. and business had closed for the day at the Bank. Capt Sheets the bank cashier had put the

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money in the vault but had not closed and locked the same. He was sitting in front of the railing talking to Colonel Griffin a prominent citizen when Jesse and Frank James rode up in front of the Bank. Frank James dismounted and went into the Bank leaveing Jesse James to hold the horses.

As Frank entered the Bank he pulled out a one hundred dollar bill and said to Captain Sheets “will you give me change for this. I have some payments to make and need the small bills”. The captain took the bill and passed behind the counter followed by James and went to the vault where James drew a revolver and shot Sheets dead. Frank turned just as Giffin was making his escape through a side door and fired at him but missed. He then gathered up all the money in sight and rushed out the front door where Jesse was exchanging shots with Citizens up the street . Franks horse had become restive from the firing and when he attempted to mount the horse shied and jumped and partly pulled and draged Frank across the street in the direction of my house. The horse finally got away and when I reached my door Frank was climbing up behind Jesse who was sitting on his horse in front of a furniture house next door to my place and fireing up the street with a gun in each hand at the citizensup about the Court House and the citizens were

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Returning the fire and the bullets were singing past my door like a small skirmish. I took a careful aim with my short barreled gun and fired but missed. Jesse turned my way on the report of the gun and I dodged back thinking they would fire into my room on their retreat and getting another cartridge to reload I got behind the door and under the counter where I could see my door and fire as they went by. But they did not come my way but rode up the street in the face of the citizens and turned at the first corner and escaped into the Gand River bottoms. They soon met a farmer on a good horse and making him dismount Frank James was once more mounted. A posse went in prsuit and the Hannibal and St Joe Rail Road was patroled for sixty miles but the James boys got across in some manner and escaped into Clay County and safety. Well to “return to our muttons” Captain Caldwell was a very rich man and also a very obstinate one having had some trouble with the local Bank would not deposit his funds there but kept large sums of money in the office vault where he kept our records. I had a sleeping room just off and adjoining the office and in cold weather I pulled my narrow bed out into the office where I kept a fire going all night. As it was

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Pretty well known that Captain Caldwell kept large sums of money at the office I naturally expected a visit at any time from some of these gangs of robbers. The Office door had a heavy lock but to strenghing that I usually placed a heavy stick of wood under the lock to act as a prop. One stormy night at about midnight this stick of wood fell to the floor with a great crash. And before I was fairly awake I was out of bed and had picked up a magazine carbine and had it at my shoulder and pointing at the door that I expected to see fly open and a half dozen desperados walk in. I knew that on their raids they allways killed first and robed afterwards. My idea was that if I could get the first two I would retreat into my bed room where I could command the door of the vaultand that I could stand them off until the citizens arrived which I knew would be quick after the first shots. I stood in a position of defence for fully five minutes and as nothing happened I laid down my carbine and taking up a revolver walked around to the door to find it safely locked with the stick of wood lying on the floor. I concluded that the high wind that was blowing had shaken the door until the stick had fallen. I told the boys about the scare the next morning and it was a long time before I heard the last of it. As for bad men who were not thieves but man killers

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I knew a lot and some intimately. There was one in Savannah, Mo who was the son of a former sheriff. And it was said he belonged to an organization called Union rangers who went about at night calling late Rebels to their doors and shooting them down in cold blood. The ex-Rebels were doing the same but that was no excuse for murder. This man named Ashley but called “old Missouri” had killed sveral men in personal encounters. I had some trouble with him at one time but which I will relate later on.

There was Colonel Jim North a newspaper man from St Joe. He and I were intimate friends. He was as mild and kind a man as ever lived. But he got into a controversy with a prominent St Joe citizen an 4 Rebels. A street fight resulted and Colonel North got his man. The friends of the dead man never rested until Colonel North was in his grave. But he got a half dozen of them first. And there was Will Hickok otherwise known as “Wild Bill”. Nobody new how many men he had killed before they finally got him at Deadwood. He killed two men at one time in Abilene, Kas. And six soldiers who had attacked him at Riley. But how many in single combat will never be know. As contrary to the usual custom of man killers he did not

notch his gun. And it is believed he never killed a man except in self defence or in his line of duty as a deputy United States Marshall. He was known to be the most expert shot and the quietest man to draw a gun of any man on the frontier. I mett Hickok twice. Once at the Cottage Hotel at Abaline where we had a drink and a smoke together. And as he had served in an Illinois Regiment in the Civil War we had a long and pleasant talk about our service. I met him again in Kansas City and we fought our battles over again, with the exception of John C. Heenan, the Prize Fighter. Will Hickok was the handsomest and most perfect shaped man I ever met. He was over six feet high and large in frane in proportion to his hight but so perfectly formed that he did not look so overly big. He dressed plainly in a black suit without ornament of any kind and wore a broad brimed black cowboy hat, not the grey abortion and fraud that is now exhibited as a Cowboy hat, but the true <u>black</u> hat. He wore his long black hair to his shoulders. And as he walked the streets he would attrack attention but no one that did not know him would take him for “Wild Bill” the noted man killer. At the time I met Hickok in Abiline that Town was a great Curiosity for the tenderfoot. It was the great shipping point for Texas cattle. And just at that

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time it was said that there were over one hundred and twenty yhousand head of cattle close by awaiting shipment. I seen some of the great droves feeding on the prairie and it looked to me that there might be a million. The Town was alive with Cow boys, Gamblers and bad men of all kinds and murder and robbery was of daily occurrence. The population of the town was about three thousand people and it was said that there was not a respectablewoman in the place. The business of the town was conducted on one long street and three out of every four business houses was a dance hall or a gambling house with a saloon attachment. We paid twenty five cents for a glass of beer and the same amount for a St Louis paper two days old or a very poor cigar. We visited the Cottage Hotel as we were told it would pay us to take a look at the crowd that congregated there. The whole lower part of the Hotel was one vast room perhaps one hundred feet square. A small space was fenced off in one corner for an Office. The rest of the room was one great drinking and gambling room. The bar extended the full length of one side of the room and there must have been twenty five bartenders on duty at one time. We were in the room for

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about two hours and at no time did I see a bar tender idle for a moment. It was a continual rush. The full length of the other side of the room was full of gambling aparatus of every description and all were busy and never idle. It was stated that the whole outfit was going night and day while the shipment of Cattle continued. The room was a seathing mass of humanity and one had to push his way to get anywhere. There was millionair owners and buyers of cattle., Cow baos, Gamblers, Thieves, and sharpers of all descriptions besides a whole lot of onlookers like ourselves. But to return to our bad men. There was General Bacon Montgomery of Sedalia. He was a Major of the Sixth Missouri Cavalry in the great war and he and I served in the same brigade and saw some hot times together in the red River Campaign and many a jolly time we had together in New Orleans. When Mongomery came home from the war the Governor of Missouri put him in command of the State Melitia with the rank of Brigadier General and later the Governor commissioned me as one of his personal aids with the rank of Major so the general and I frequently met and our old war friendship was renewed. Montgomery was a great, big, jolly fellow and the kind of person one was

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glad to meet and be friendly with. But he was the kind of a man one did not want to have trouble with – just as soon as he was put in command of the State troops the ex-Rebels and their sympathysers commenced to get into personal encounters with him and street fights resulted in which he allways got his man.

“Poland Joe” was another bad man that I knew well. But he was a different order. He was coarse and vindictive and never forgot and injury or a favor done. I was boarding one cold winter at Keelers Hotel at Lawrence Kansas and a lot of us was sitting around the stove in the office one cold stormy evening when a tough looking individual walked into the office and said to Keeler that he had just got employment with a local butcher for the winter and that he was out of money and would like to have board for a week on credit. But Keeler said no. And the fellow said all right and started to walk out. I thought it pretty tough turning a man out on such a night and I called for the fellow to stop and I said to Keeler let the man stay and I will stand good for a weeks board and it was so arranged. The fellow came to where I was seated and said I would lose nothing by the

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arrangement. This was “Poland Joe”. He had been working for the Sherry brothers killing buffalos for their pelts during the fall and had got into some kind of trouble and had to get out. He said the Sherry brothers owed him for killing and skinning two thousand buffalo. I seen a good deal of Poland Joe during that winter. He never told me what his last trouble was but I judged by what he did say that he had killed a man. Sometimes when he was under the influence of liquor he would let out enough to show that he had engaged in Stage, Bank and Train robbery and that he had killed a number of men in personal encounters. He was not a boaster but left these things out unknowingly while drinking. I afterwards learned that what he had let slip was true. He did not forget the favor I did him on that cold night and whenever I went uptown at night he would put a butcher knife in his boot where he had a sheath made on purpose to carry it and would follow me about to see that I came to no harm and on one occasion did save me from getting a bad cut from a razor in the hand s of a Negro who came up behind me in a nasty row I had got into by breaking a chair over the Negro’s head. Joe disappeared in the Spring and some years later I heard he had been killed at Deadwood.

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And there were other men of the underworld of a different character that I knew in the West. At Kansas City in the wild and wooly days of that Town, Ed Hennessy and Ira Dibble two well known professional gamblers, men that I had known in Terre Haute. One I had went to school with and the other I had served with in the Army. Hennessy was what was known as a Square dealer or honest player. And Dibble as a tin horn or brace gamster and sometimes the later took a hand in three card monte and similar swindling games, acting as a capper. While I was living in North West Missouri and along the Missouri River I used frequently to go visiting in Kansas City. At that time in the late sixties and early seventies all the Missouri River towns was as tough as they make them. Literally swarming with murderers, thieves, gamblers and swindlers of every description – desperate men the left overs of the late war. And Kansas City Missouri was the worst of all. Kansas City Kansas did not exist at that time. Where the latter city now stands was a heavily wooded bottom lad with a small Rail Road station at the State Line. There was no stockyards or Packing houses. And Wyandotte, just across the Kansas River was but a village. No mans lfe was safe in the streets of

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Kansas City after dark and it was dangerous to be on River front alone in daylight. I had a narrow escape one time when I went down to the river one raw windy day to cross on the ferry and take a train on the Missouri Valley Rail Road . It was quite cold and when I got to the levee I found the ferry boat just pulling out and I knew that I would have to await for some time for a passage the saloon on the corner was full of drunken men but I noticed another saloon in the adjoining building and I went in. It was a long narrow room and all the shutters were up at door and window except one and the gas was burning. I thought it singular but did not suspect anything as yet. The stove was at the side and at the far end of the room from the door and behind the stairway and I noticed two men behind the stove next the wall. While warming my hands I heard a movement at the bar and the two men had got up and were moving around the stove. I turned quick and saw that the bartender was coming out with a bung starter in his hand and it flashed across me in an instant that I had got into one of those places kept purposely to rob and murder. I moved quickly towards the bar saying come boys lets have a drink and took my position at the end of the bar next door. The bar tender evidently thought it would

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be best to drug me than to use violence and returned to his place behind the bar. I noticed that when I ordered whisky that the others ordered gin. While they were in the act of drinking I set my untasted liquor on the counter threw down a half dollar saying keep the changand walked out in a hurry. And I considered that I had a close shave.

The gambling was open and some of the places where it was carried on had inteligent and well dressed Negros stationed at the foot of the stairways calling out to the passers by the kind of game to be had. But the skin games that employed cappers were more secluded and a stranger without a Capper had some difficulty in getting into the gambling rooms. At the times when I would visit Kansas City, Hennessy and Dibble would take me about and show me the sights of the Town. And I was made acquanted with scores of men who represented all phases of the underworld. Ira and Ed allways made it understood that I was only a sightseer and did not take a hand in games. And those kind of people never forget a face and I have no doubt thyat these introductions may have saved me more than once when I have been in shady places. I do know that on several occasions on Rail Road

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cars three card monte and kindred men have let me alone while they would solicit all others nearby to bet on their games. As a rule a person can go allmost anywhere and as long as he behaves himself and minds his own business will not be molested by bad men. But a man in public life was likely to get into trouble at any time. But one time in St. Joe the above rule did not work. I had gone into a public garden to listen to some fine music and a drunken man, Ex-Rebel, came to the table where I was seated and seeing a Grand Army Emblem that I was wearing shouted “Hurrah for Jeff Davis”. Seeing that the fellow wanted to force a quarrel on me I got up and moved off and he followed me evidently thinking that because I was a small man that I would not resent an injury – a mistaken idea as he learned. I had some trouble with two or three people while in business in Gallatin. I rented a Store room from one Rockwell who had the reputation of being a man killer. Rockwell had been a mormon and had gone to Salt Lake with the moromons when they first imigrated to that place but had returned evidently with a good deal of money and a shady reputation. I had done some repairs on the building and we had a verbal understanding that I was to have credit on the rent for my outlay. But when we come to settle Rockwell went back on the contract. We argued the matter. He with a long bladed knife in his hand

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portending to pare his finger nails and I with cocked derringer in my coat pocket pushed up against him so as to allmost touch his stomach. finally some one who saw trouble in the air suggested arbitration and we agreed to leave the settlement to a mutual friend. The arbitrater decided to split the difference and we settled in that way.

But this was a case where arbitration did not arbitrate. I had sold out my business and before I left the town gave my brother who was visiting me some accounts to collect before he should leave. But as soon as I had left the town Rockwell went to my brother who was an eighteen year old youth and made him give up an account for a considerable amount. There was nothing else for him to do as he was a stranger in the Town. But later when I learned the facts I was tempted to go back to Gallatin and have it out with Rockwell but concluded it would be a foolish thing to do.

In connection with my other business I kept a Restaurant and tough men frequently came in but we usually had no trouble with them. But I recollect that on one night a man who had served with Quantrell in the war came in for a lunch. He was very drunk and when the time came to close up the house for the night refused to go out.

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I had noticed that he had taken a long bladed knife out of his pocket and put it open up his sleeve and I told Joe my baker to look out for it. And Joe said that if I would get him around by the door and throw the door open he would pitch the fellow out. This I did and Joe who was a powerful man in the arms on account of his business yet a small man in stature, rushed up behind the fellow and catching him under the arms threw him bodily out headdformost into the street.

I was quite intimate with a bad man who kept a saloon in Gallatin. Frank was the only name that any of us knew for him. His customers were mostly graders, men of several nationalities who were working on a couple of new Rail Roads just being built through the County, and a tough lot. After each pay day Frank usually had to shoot two or three of them to keep them in some kind of order. He never shot to kill except it was absolutely necessary. But being an expert marksman he got them in an arm or a leg which was enough to settle the whole gang for a time. We were quite intimate as he purchased from me all his supplies for his lunch counter. We used to go to Kansas City together when there was some unusual attraction on at one of the theaters and Frank would never let me spend a cent on such occassions. When he came to Gallition he rented all the ice houses in the town so that he

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had all the ice at hand and the other saloons had to get ice by wagon from Hamilton twenty five miles distant. Late one night he came to my place and said he was going to leave town before the next daylight and told me to make out a bill of sale for the only full ice house left, for him to sign, and for me to give him a dollar to make the sale legal, which I did. I would have given a hundred if it had been necessary to get the ice. He said that he had made five thousand dollars since coming to Gallatin six months before. That he had paid all his debts in town – but that he owed about one thousand dollars to wholesale liquor houses that he was giving to beat and that he had given his saloon and fixtures to his bar tender. He said that he was going to Texas to sell whisky and run gambling aparatus at the new Rail Road camps down there. In the morning Frank was gone and long after I heard of him as having a great drinking and gambling tent at a great Rail Road Camp down in the lone Star State.

I also met the notorious “Canada Bill” the King of the Western confidence men more than one time. Once I was awaiting a delayed train at the Relay house opposite the City of Omaha. I was sitting in a Saloon to pass the time when what appeared to be a respectable Stock farmer

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came in. Besides the bartender I was the only person in the room. The new Comer looked around the room and seeing me he said “I never like to drink alone. Sir, will you join me” Now if he had said pardner I should have declined at once. I glanced at the bar man and he noded. So I went up and had a drink and a Cigar with the stranger and we sat down and smoked and had a long talk while waiting for our car. He told me who he was and said that he wished he had the moral courage to quit the business he was engaged in. and that sometimes when he would have a big roll of money he would declare to himself that he would now go back to his old home in Canada and lead a decent life but that the first thing he knew he would be at the gambling table and that he would never leave it until he had lost his last dollar and he would have to commence over again. I saw “Canada Bill” several times after that and finally he disappeared from his old haunts. He had gone back home penniless and broken in health to die in a poor house. It was believed ~~that he had in all made a half million of dollars by his schemes.~~

In regard to hunting we used to have some pretty good hunting around and about Terre Haute away back in the fifties. We would only have to go a short distance across the River to find game in abundence, such as Rabbits

Squirrel, Quail, Woodcock, Prairie Chicken, Wild Turkey, and occasionally a deer was killed. And there was frequent fox hunts in the hills across the River and in the dense woods on the River south of town (this is in the early 50s).

There were two packs of fox hounds in the County. One pack owned by long Tom Durham down about Honey Creek and the other by Andy Caldwell who had a tannery at Oak and 3rd Streets, the City limits at that time. I can remember when as a boy seeing those packs of hounds streaming through town on the way to a fox chase. There was also other game in the neighborhood. I have seen the River south of town black with wild geese and ducks in the spring and fall of the year. And cranes by the score on the sand bars up and down the River. and great flocks of the big white swans flying down the Wabash River. And wild pidgeons would fly over town and west and east of town in such numbers that we could not see the sun for hours at a time and lasting for weeks – and the poping of all sorts of guns for hours sounded like a respectable skirmish line in action.

~~See Vol Two for a Continuance of the Recollections.~~

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See Volume Two (2) for a continuance of Recollections.

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